

women veterans. In Salt Lake City, UT, a woman veteran not only received all of her prenatal care from VA but also delivered a beautiful baby girl under the care of her VA obstetrician. Yet, for all of its recent progress, VA still must do more to ensure that women veterans are receiving the care that they need and deserve. As they return from the battlefield, the VA system must be equipped to help women veterans step back into their lives as mothers, wives, and citizens.

I am incredibly proud of the women who have served or are serving our Nation in uniform, and I strongly believe we must do all we can to honor them. That is why I led the effort to pass into law the Women Veterans Health Care Improvement Act. This bill, which was included as part of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010, helped to transform the way that VA addresses the needs of women veterans. This act authorized the VA to provide neonatal care, train mental health professionals to provide mental health services for sexual trauma, develop a childcare pilot program, and staff each VA medical center with a full-time women veterans program manager. VA has an obligation to provide women veterans with quality care, and we have an obligation to make sure VA does so.

Our commitment to women veterans does not end with passing legislation like the Women Veterans Health Care Improvement Act. We must actively monitor the implementation and effect of these bills to make sure that no woman falls through the cracks. In December of 2010, a VA Office of Inspector General report found that the Veterans Benefit Association had not fully assessed available military sexual trauma-related claims data and had no clear understanding of how consistently these claims were being adjudicated. While both men and women service members carry the devastating wounds of military sexual trauma, the GAO found in 2002 that 22 percent of screened women service members reported military sexual trauma compared to 1 percent of screened men. With this shocking statistic in mind, Senator TESTER and I pressed VBA to improve the accuracy and consistency of their military sexual trauma-related disability claims process. I am happy to say that VA agreed with our assessment and has since worked to overhaul the way it processes military sexual trauma disability claims.

Mr. President, the committee's experience with military sexual trauma disability claims is symbolic of the kind of work that remains to be done for women veterans. I recognize the challenges that women veterans face over the coming years and remain determined to work on their behalf. The promise that we make to our veterans is sacred and knows no gender. To honor our veterans, we must honor this promise for each and every one of them.

EYE DONOR AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, March 2012 marks the 29th annual National Eye Donor Month—a month devoted to honoring eye donors and corneal recipients, and increasing awareness of the need for eye donations.

Since President Ronald Reagan declared the first National Eye Donor Month in 1983, the Eye Bank Association of America, EBAA, and its 97-member eyebanks have used National Eye Donor Month to educate the general public about the donors and their families who provide life-changing corneal transplants for over 50,000 people annually.

Of the EBAA's 97-member eyebanks, four are located in Ohio, and they possess a deep-rooted commitment to restoring sight by providing corneas for sight-saving transplant procedures. In 2010, charitable eye donations made by Ohio residents allowed our State eyebanks to provide more than 1,000 corneas to help their friends and neighbors regain sight, and an additional 1,000 eyes and corneas for additional surgical procedures, as well as for research and educational purposes.

These selfless efforts have not gone unnoticed, changing the lives of thousands of Ohioans through the selfless gifts of donors and their families.

The Central Ohio Lions Eye Bank in Columbus, serving 45 counties, has made possible over 12,000 corneal transplants since 1973.

In the past 10 years, the Cincinnati Eye Bank for Sight Restoration, located in the southern part of our State, gave the gift of sight to nearly 6,300 individuals through transplantation.

In northern Ohio, the Cleveland Eye Bank has provided corneas for over 20,000 cornea transplants since its founding in 1958.

Lions Eye Bank of West Central Ohio, LEBWCO, in Dayton has provided high-quality ocular tissue to surgeons and patients since 1982 and serves more than 1 million people in nine counties. LEBWCO is dedicated to making the gift of sight a reality for the Dayton community and all Ohioans.

Since the EBAA's inception in 1961, corneal transplants have changed the lives of over 1,000,000 people. However, much remains to be done to offer more people the opportunity to receive life-changing corneal transplants.

I encourage all Americans to register to become eye donors. Inform your family of your wishes; designate yourself as a donor on your driver's license; and register as an eye donor through your State donor registry.

I urge my colleagues to work with their local eyebanks and the EBAA to promote the importance of eye donation and its life-enhancing effects on corneal recipients.

During March 2012, let us commemorate the lives of the donors who make corneal transplants possible, celebrate the sight restored by these transplants, and work to widen the path for additional advancements in corneal transplantation.

TRIBUTE TO RAYMOND J. PRICE III

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President. I rise today to honor Raymond J. Price III upon his retirement from the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, IUPAT. For more than 30 years, Ray Price has represented his fellow workers in Ohio and across the country with distinction and dignity.

In September 1978, he started as an apprentice painter at IUPAT Painters Local 867 in Cleveland. He honed his craft to become a journey worker just 3 years later. As he rose through the ranks he earned the trust and admiration of his fellow brothers and sisters progressing as a business representative, business manager, and, by 1995, as manager and secretary-treasurer of IUPAT District Council 6, which covers all of Ohio and central Kentucky.

He would become heavily involved with the Cleveland Building Trades Council and served as vice president of the Cleveland AFL-CIO Federation of Labor. What IUPAT members in Ohio understood about his loyalty and toughness, soon members from across the country would also recognize. In 1999 he joined the International Union staff as a representative of the general president and, later, as general vice-president at large. With each new challenge and responsibility, Ray showed how a progressive labor movement is critical to our country and to our middle class.

Thank you, Ray, for your counsel and friendship. As you spend time at your cottage on the Sandusky River, I wish you a happy retirement with your wife Mary Ann, your children, and extended family by your side. You have left a legacy that shows how one can make a career fighting for working men and women—and making a community and country more just and fairer for all.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE DAVIES

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today I honor New Haven open chief executive officer Mike Davies, who was named a 2012 inductee of the International Tennis Hall of Fame and Museum, a nonprofit organization founded in 1954. The official induction ceremony will take place this summer, and so, very appropriately, the outdoor tennis season provides an opportunity to honor a man who has significantly influenced the game of tennis. He is truly an athlete and sportsman for all seasons.

Other 2012 inductees include U.S. Gold medalist Jennifer Capriati, Brazilian top athlete Gustavo Kuerten, Russian star Yevgeny Kafelnikov, and three-time Paralympic medalist Thomas "Randy" Snow, all recognized in the Recent Player Category. Snow, who passed away in 2009, was a tireless leader for the disabled, inspiring many as a champion of wheelchair tennis. Spanish superstar Manuel Orantes and Australian champion Thelma Coyne-Long